United Nations A/73/429

General Assembly

Distr.: General
15 October 2018

Original: English

Seventy-third session
Agenda item 34 (a)
Prevention of armed conflict: prevention of armed conflict

Letter dated 5 October 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith, on behalf of my delegation, the Declaration on Peace and Cessation of War (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34 (a).

The Declaration remains open for signature by the delegations concerned.

(*Signed*) Odo **Tevi**
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Vanuatu
to the United Nations

18-17139 (E) 171018

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 5 October 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Declaration on Peace and Cessation of War

The delegation of the Republic of Vanuatu do solemnly declare,

Recalling the resolution 3314 (XXIX) on 14 December 1974 on the definition of aggression, resolution 36/103 on 9 December 1981, on Declaration on the Inadmissibility of Intervention and Interference in the Internal Affairs of States, resolution 2625 (XXV) on friendly relations and co-operation among States, resolution 53/243 of 13 September 1999 on a Culture of Peace, 70/262 on Sustaining Peace, resolution 71/189 of 19 of December 2016 on the Declaration on the Right to Peace and other relevant resolutions,

Renewing the determination set forth in the Preamble to the Charter "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war",

Recalling the commitment with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and its value and validity recognized in the resolution 70/3 of Declaration on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations 23 of October,

Welcoming the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and acknowledging in line with the 2030 Agenda, that sustainable development will be at risk without sustainable peace and security,

Welcoming also the UN Secretary General's vision on prevention of prioritizing conflict prevention and sustaining peace,

Emphasizing that sustaining peace is a shared task and responsibility that needs to be fulfilled by the government and all relevant stakeholders, and should flow through all three pillars of the United Nations' engagement at all stages of conflict, and in all its dimensions, and needs sustained international attention and assistance,

Reaffirming faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of women and men and of nations large and small, the promotion of social progress and better standards of life for people and future generations and the need to facilitate peaceful coexistence among nations and the world's religions, beliefs, and ethnicities,

Acknowledging that the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all human beings is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace throughout the world,

Reaffirming that the equal, full and effective participation of both women and men is essential for the promotion and attainment of sustainable peace and security,

Reaffirming also the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and the need for member states to increase the role of women in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Aiming to maintain international peace and security and determined to pass on to successive generations an invaluable inheritance of a world free of wars,

Ensuring the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force should not be used, save in accordance with the conditions prescribed by the relevant international law,

Recognizing that developing friendly relations and cooperation among nations based on the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples constitutes a significant contribution to contemporary international law, and that its effective application is paramount to the sustainability of world peace and security,

Recognizing also the common values of faith that permeates all religions and religious scriptures and holy texts are for the promotion of peaceful coexistence, tolerance, and mutual respect,

Reaffirming the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States,

Convinced that peaceful means to settle international disputes can replace the rule of war with the rule of law,

Calling upon the Member States to promote and respect the rule of law at the international level and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained,

Emphasizes States to undertake, prosecute and sanction gross and systematic acts of violence undertaken in the name of religion in accordance with the rules of international law including fundamental rights guaranteed,

Emphasizes also that States bring about disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as weapons capable of causing widespread and unnecessary suffering, such as through the illicit use of small arms and light weapons, and weapons incompatible with international humanitarian law,

Recognizing the utmost importance of general and complete disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, and that peace, security and economic and social development are indivisible,

Prohibition of the threat or use of force

1. *Encourages* States to in their international relations refrain from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations;

2. *Calls Upon* States to refrain in their international relations from all acts of aggression and other uses of force contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;

3. *Emphasizes* the need for States to prohibit any act or threat of violence, whatever its motives or purposes, that occurs for the advancement of an individual or collective criminal agenda;

4. *Calls upon* States to abstain from interference in the internal conflicts of other States except for the maintenance of international peace and security and in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant rules of international law;

War Potential

5. *Emphasizes* the importance for States to co-operate with a view to working towards a global reduction in armament production;

6. *Urges* States to not produce, assist in, encourage, or induce, the production of weapons of mass destruction, or weapons capable of causing indiscriminate or widespread and unnecessary suffering, or weapons incompatible with international humanitarian law;

7. *Calls upon* States to take measures to ensure that existing weapons of mass destruction, weapons capable of causing widespread and unnecessary suffering and weapons incompatible with international humanitarian law are dismantled or destroyed, and States should cooperate in disarmament and the reduction of arms stockpiles, ideally under international supervision, in which decommissioned weapons manufacturing facilities should be repurposed, so that they may serve purposes that are beneficial to humanity in general;

8. *Invites* States to strive to reduce excessive standing armies and military bases to a degree that the right to self-defence and international peacekeeping operations are not impaired;

9. *Recommends* that States increase their efforts to diminish trade in weapons prohibit the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors;

Friendly relations and the prohibition of acts of aggression

10. *Reaffirms* United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2625 (XXV), and encourages States to develop friendly relations based upon respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of all peoples, and endeavor to take appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;

11. *Emphasizes* the duty of States to refrain from any forcible action that deprives all peoples of their rights to self-determination;

12. *Recalls* that territory of a State shall not be the object of military occupation resulting from the use of force in the contravention of the provisions of the Charter and shall not be the object of acquisition by another State resulting from the threat or use of force;

13. *Encourages* States to promote accountability, in accordance with relevant United Nations resolutions and international laws, in particular the Geneva Convention and its additional protocols, and take measures to ensure that they do not conduct any activity which amounts to the violation of such laws;

14. *Encourages also* States to condemn, and criminalize in their domestic laws, the planning, preparation, initiation or execution, by any individual or group of persons in a position to exercise control over, or to direct the political and military actions of a State, in an act of aggression against another State which, by its character, gravity and scale, constitutes a manifest violation of international law, thus amounting to a crime of aggression;

15. *Recommends* that States refrain from allowing their territories to be placed at the disposal of other actors, whether States or non-State actors, to engage in armed force against a third State except in situations sanctioned by international law;

16. *Calls upon* States to bear in mind the principle of sovereign equality of States and to seek consultation with all other States on the basis of reciprocal respect, on issues that may relate to them, in order to resolve and prevent disputes which may arise, provided that this provision shall apply without prejudice to human rights law and human dignity;

State boundaries

17. *Urges* States to refrain in their international relations from military, political, economic, or any other form of coercion aimed against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations;

18. *Reminds* States of their duties to refrain from the threat or use of force which violates existing internationally recognized boundaries of other States, or as a means of resolving international disputes, including territorial and frontier disputes, in a manner inconsistent with international law and other relevant United Nations Resolutions;

19. *Emphasizes* the obligation of Member States to refrain from any acts of aggression including acts of incitement, planning, preparation, initiation or commission of any other act of aggression by a State, a group of States, or an illegal armed group, or by any foreign or external entity, against the sovereignty, political independence, or territorial integrity of any State;

Self-determination

20. *Affirms* the duty of every State to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other State or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations;

21. *Reaffirms* the principle of the self-determination of all peoples, that States shall not engage in any intervention that seeks to divide or separate a State in a manner inconsistent with the relevant rules of international law;

22. *Emphasizes* that States have the duty to refrain from prematurely recognising an entity that has purported to secede from another State in accordance to international law;

23. *Urges* States to encourage nation-States that have been divided as a result of foreign military intervention, aggression or occupation to engage in co-operation and mutual dialogue, including, inter alia, measures which may result in peaceful coexistence within the region;

24. *Recommends* that any political system in which power is exercised beyond the term limit permitted by domestic law by an individual or regime amounts to a manifest denial of the right to self-determination and should be condemned;

Dispute settlement

25. *Encourages* States to recognize the obligation to settle their international disputes through peaceful means such as dialogue, negotiations, arbitration, mediation, conciliation, judicial settlement, resort to regional agencies or arrangement or other peaceful means of their own choice in such a manner that international peace and security are not endangered;

26. *Encourages also* States to accept the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, in accordance with Article 36, paragraph 2, of the Statute of the Court and Article 93, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Charter, in the interest of global peace and security and as a means of ensuring that disputes are settled peacefully and in accordance with international law;

27. *Encourages further* States to adopt measures to penalize the failure to comply with the decision of the International Court of Justice or any other judicial body in any case to which is a party;

Right to self-defence

28. *Reaffirms* that nothing in the present resolution should be construed so as to impair the inherent right to individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a State, in accordance with the provisions of international law, until such time as the Security Council has taken measures to maintain international peace and security;

29. *Reaffirms also* that measures taken by Member States in the exercise of their right to self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the United Nations Charter to take, at any time, such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security;

Freedom of religion

30. *Encourages* States to unite and strengthen international efforts to foster a global dialogue for the promotion of a culture of tolerance and peace at all levels, based on respect for human rights and diversity of religions and beliefs;

31. *Calls upon* States to refrain from and prohibit the usage of religion by governments, groups, or individuals in order to justify or to incite acts of violence against others;

32. *Requests* States to foster religious freedom by allowing members of religious communities to practice their religion, whether publicly or in private, and to promote the full respect for and protection of places of worship and religious sites, cemeteries and shrines;

Religion, ethnic identity and peace

33. *Recommends* States to engage in multilateral consultations to deal with situations where differences attributable to religion or ethnicity pose a threat to peace and security so that remedial action may be taken and to identify the root causes of a situation causing tension between different religious or ethnic groups, in order to adopt necessary measures to promote mutual understanding between the groups concerned;

34. *Calls upon* States to take measures to ensure that religious beliefs or ethnic identity are not utilised as a pretext for all acts of violence and to take adequate measures that lead to the prosecution and punishment of such activities in circumstances where individuals or groups perpetrate or assist in such acts;

35. *Calls upon also* States to implement, in good faith, legal measures against individuals or groups attempting to use their religious beliefs to perpetrate or assist in all acts of violence, including those that threaten the territorial integrity and political independence of States;

Spreading a Culture of Peace

36. *Encourages* States to collaborate with groups and organizations that seek to further the cause of peace as a global movement and to facilitate such groups in their awareness-raising activities, including providing education in human rights and peace studies, as provided for, inter alia, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1999 United Nations Declaration on a Culture of Peace;

37. *Encourages also* States to facilitate activities, commemorations, and initiatives that engage public consciousness with peace, including the erection of peace monuments alongside war monuments, in order to raise public awareness of the need for and value of peace, which necessity is agreed upon toward preserving a lasting Culture of Peace;

38. *Calls upon* States to promote a Culture of Peace including ensuring conditions in which:

(a) citizens, particularly women, are able to participate in the political affairs of the State as equals regardless of religious or ethnic differences;

(b) the freedom and independence of the media is enhanced;

(c) education is imparted to promote respect and mutual understanding among different religious beliefs and ethnic groups;

(d) the right to development of peoples, including the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, can be realized;

(e) the wellbeing of all mankind is promoted with an aim to guarantee peaceful coexistence amongst States.